

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OES-07 L-03 ACDA-12 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-05 INR-07 NASA-01 NSC-05 ERDA-05 SS-15 /071 W
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FM AMEMBASSY ANTANANARIVO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9955
GODDARD SPACE FLT CEN GREENBELT MARYLAND PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L ANTANANARIVO 2141

GODDARD SPACE FLT CEN ATTN 802/MR MCKEEHAN

E O 11652: GDS
TAGS: TSPA
SUBJ: NASA STATION ISSUE

REF: STATE 276763 (B) ANTANANARIVO 2050

1. SUMMARY. DRM (DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF MADAGASCAR) ASKS FOR MORE SPECIFIC INFORMATION ON THREE INSPECTORS WHICH NASA WANTS TO SEND OUT, AND IMPLIES THAT A MORE FORTHCOMING USG POSITION ON PAYMENT MAY BE NECESSARY BEFORE INSPECTION CAN TAKE PLACE. END SUMMARY.

2. I CALLED ON SOLOFOSON NOVEMBER 23 TO PASS ON TO HIM SUBSTANCE OF REF A. HIS FIRST REACTION WAS THAT HE WOULD HAVE TO RECONSULT HIS GOVERNMENT ABOUT THE INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF INSPECTORS FROM TWO TO THREE. WHEN I OPINED THAT FROM MY READING OF DEPARTMENT'S MESSAGE THE THIRD MAN MUGHT BE JUST A PHOTOGTAPHER AND NOT A SCIENTIST OR TECHNICIAN, HE ASKED ME TO OBTAIN EXACT IDENTITY AND QUALIFICATIONS OF THREE MEN INVOLVED. HE COMMENTED THAT DRM EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON HAD REPORTED THAT NASA EMPLOYEE BY THE NAME OF KEEHAN, BEARING AN OFFICIAL PASSPORT, HAD ALREADY APPLIED FOR A VISA FOR THE PURPOSE OF THE INSPECTION. HE RECOMMENDED THAT THE INTENDED
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INSPECTORS NOT APPLY FOR VISAS UNTIL DRM HAD GIVEN US THE GO AHEAD, AS DRM EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON DID NOT WANT TO BE PUT IN EMBARRASSING POSITION OF HAVING TO DELAY VISA ISSUANCE.

3. SOLOFOSON THEN ASKED WHAT THE USG POSITION WAS ON THE QUESTION OF A PAYMENT, WHICH IS A QURSTION OF PRINCIPLE FOR

DRM. I REPLIED THAT OUR POSITION HAD NOT CHANGED SINCE OUR LAST TALK ON NOCEMBER 11 (REF B) AND GAVE HIM SUBSTANCE OF PARA 5 REF A. HE REPLIED THAT WHILE HE UNDERSTOOD THIS POSITION, IT MIGHT, IF STRICTLY MAINTAINED, CAUSE DIFFICULTIES FOR A SETTLEMENT. HE URGED ME TO TRY TO CONVINCE USG OF NECESSITY FOR SOME KIND OF PRIOR COMMITMENT TO A PAYMENT. IN THE INTEREST OF AN EARLY SETTLEMENT AND THE CONTRIBUTION IT WOULD MAKE TO IMPROVED US/DRM RELATIONS.

4. SOLOFOSON THEN WENT INTO AN EXPLANATION, AS HE HAD ON NOVEMBER 11, OF ORIGIN OF \$200,000 FIGURE, SAYING THAT DRM HAD ORIGINALLY ASKED \$300,000. I COUNTERED THAT WHILE USG MAY HAVE AT ONE TIME AGREED TO PAY \$100,000 A YEAR BACK RENT FOR TWO YEARS, THIS HAD BEEN PREDICTATED UPON STATION REMAINING IN OPERATION. NOT ONLY HAD STATION BEEN CLOSED BY DRM, BUT NOW DRM STOOD TO ACQUIRE MOST OF THE STATION'S ASSETS WITH A FAR LARGER VALUE. SOLOFOSON REITERATED THAT \$200,000 SEEMED A PRETTY SMALL SUM FOR THE USG TO PAY IN THE INTEREST OF BETTER RELATIONS. HE THEN MADE THE STRANGE COMMENT THAT HE UNDERSTOOD OUR PREVIOUS POSITION TO HAVE BEEN THAT THE \$200,000 TO BE PAID BY THE USG WAS A SET FIGURE OR A MINIMUM. I CORRECTED HIM ON THIS, SAYING IT HAD BEEN A MAXIMUM FIGURE OF THE AMOUNT WHICH MIGHT HAVE BEEN PAID INDER OUR EARLIER OFFER, THE EXACT FIGURE DEPENDING UPON THE CONDITION OF THE EQUIPMENT TO BE RECUPERATED BY NASA AFTER INSPECTION. AS WE REVIEWED
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HISTORY OF NEGOTIATIONS, SOLOFOSON ALSO SAID THAT THE DRM REMAINED WILLING, AS IT HAD BEEN EARLIER THIS YEAR, TO FOREGO ANY PAYMENT IN RETURN FOR COMPLETE TURNOVER OF THE STATION WITH NO INSPECTION AND NOTHING RECUPERATED.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: I URGE THAT I BE INFORMED ASAP OF PARTICULARS REQUESTED ON THREE INSPECTORS SO THAT I MAY PASS THIS INFORMATION ON TO SOLOFOSON AND KEEP OUR DIALOGUE GOING.

6. COMMENT: IT IS EVIDENT THAT SOLOFOSON HAS BACKED OFF SOMEWHAT FROM HIS POSITION OF NOVEMBER 11 AND THAT IT IS NO LONGER ASSURED THAT NASA INSPECTORS WILL BE ALLOWED TO COME UNLESS SOME SORT OF NEW FORMULA IS AGREED TO REGARDING POSSIBILITY OF PAYMENT. I WOULD PERSONALLY HOPE THAT DEPARTMENT AND NASA COULD COME UP WITH A NEW POSITION, EVEN IF CHANGE IS ONLY COSMETIC. I THINK IT IS IMPORTANT THAT INSPECTION BE UNDERTAKEN AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, FOR IT IS CONCEIVABLE THAT STATION WILL BE FOUND IN SUCH A STATE THAT NASA WILL NOT WANT TO RECUPERATE ANYTHING AND THEREFORE QUESTION OF PAYMENT WILL BE GERMAINE. IF, AS IS MORE PROBABLE, SOME EQUIPMENT IS WORTH RECUPERATING, I

WOULD HOPE THAT, IN CONSIDERATION OF OVERALL USG INTERESTS,
WE CAN BE SOMEWHAT LIBERAL ON THE QUESTION OF PAYMENT,
WITHIN THE \$200,000 CEILING. SOME GENERAL ADVANCE ASSURANCE
OF THIS WHICH I COULD PASS ON WOULD MAKE AN EARLY INSPECTION
MORE LIKELY. I CANNOT THINK OF ANY SPECIFIC FORMULA TO
SUGGEST AT THIS TIME UNLESS IT WOULD BE TO DRAW UP A
HYPOTHETICAL LIST OF EQUIPMENT WHICH, IF FOUND IN GOOD SHAPE,
WOULD JUSTIFY THE \$200,000 PAYMENT AND PRESENT THIS TO THE
DRM IN ADVANCE, WITH THE PROVISIO THAT ANY DETERIORATION
FOUND BY INSPECTORS WOULD OF COURSE REDUCE THE AMOUNT TO BE
PAID. I REALIZE THAT I AM NOT TALKING ABOUT MY OWN MONEY,
OR EVEN THAT OF THE DEPARTMENT, BUT I DO THINK THERE IS
SOME VALUE TO USG IN A BETTER CLIMATE OF RELATIONS OUT HERE
AND THAT THIS FACTOR SHOULD BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT, WITHIN
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THE PARAMETERS ALREADY SET.

7. I WOULD ALSO LIKE AUTHORIZATION TO USE A MORE PRAGMATIC
LINE OF ARGUMENT IN MY FUTURE DISCUSSIONS WITH DRM ON THIS
SUBJECT. WHILE I WOULD CONTINUE TO POINT OUT RIGHTS AND
WRONGS OF PRESENT SITUATION AND PAST HISTORY AS WE SEE THEM,
I THINK IT WOULD HELP TO MAKE OUR POSITION MORE ACCEPTABLE
TO DRM OFFICIALS IF I COULD SAY THAT NASA IS UNABLE TO
CONSIDER THE SITUATION OF THE MADAGASCAR STATION AS AN
ISOLATED ONE AND MUST KEEP IN MIND ITS WORLD-WIDE INTERESTS:
I.E., ONE REASON IT CANNOT BE MORE GENEROUS TOWARD DRM IS
BECAUSE OF THE EFFECT THIS MIGHT HAVE IN OTHER COUNTRIES
WHERE NASA OPERATES. BARRETT

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Message Attributes

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Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
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Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TRACKING STATIONS
Control Number: n/a
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Sent Date: 23-Nov-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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